

2/10/71

Dear Dick,

I finally have the opportunity to sit down with many of your past mailings, and can make detailed comment. Again, sorry to have delayed so long.

One of your chief criticisms of my criticisms ~~was~~ re your head shot piece was ~~in~~ in reference to the idea of bullets bursting. You say that "Do you need to know much about ballistics to know that the bullet burst. If we don't know anything else about the bullet, surely we know that it burst."

Understand, first off, that I am not in the least way questioning whether the bullet burst. I am thoroughly convinced of it--beyond doubt. What I was saying applied to someone with no familiarity with firearms and bullets, who is under the impression that all bullets are the same and who has no idea what happens when a bullet enters a body, especially someone who is pro-Warren Report and has lapped up the incredible bullshit ballistics theories mentioned in it. To such a person, it is equally feasible for this to happen to a military bullet as to a varmint, to something moving 800 fps as to something at 4,500 fps. To such a person, the fragments got there because the bullet broke. It is not such an obvious inference that tremendous forces must have been involved, that a bursting was required.

So, thinking of these people (among whose ranks I used to be), I thought it would be very useful if you included a paragraph explaining the idea of bursting, and why bursting as opposed to other bullshit explanations (like those used by the autopsy doctors) is what happened in JFK's head.

You seem to think (page 3 of your 1/8/71 to me and Harold) that I confuse bursting and breaking apart. I do not; indeed, it was you who drummed the crucial distinction into me. Again, I was trying to point out that there are many who simply don't know enough to make the distinction. That Sylvia had no trouble understanding is fine. But remember that she is someone who is already familiar with the theory that a bursting bullet hit the head, and, more important, is not ~~inclined~~ inclined to believe the Warren Report and be skeptical of critics. It is such people who you will have to convince, and it is such people who will easily have "trouble" understanding.

You offer me a reference re effects of different projectiles hitting the skull. This I would like very much. The documentation for my work on the head shots is already rather extensive, and even if I don't use this in footnotes, it would be good to have otherwise. If you refer to Wound Ballis, I have tried futilely to get this in libraries here and none has it.

As I look over the other stuff, I see that this is really the only extensive comments I had to make, for otherwise we are in essential agreement.

On publication, I still support the idea of having this published, but not in a way that would invite wide public disclosure. I think it would be far better to have it published in either a gun magazine or a medical journal, where a select audience would see it.

Although I've misplaced my notes, I remember that I found several items of interest in going through some microfilm at the library. Among them these:

Tom Dillard got at least one picture outside of Parkland hospital, probably early for I do not believe the top is on the limousine yet. This was printed in the Dallas Morning News after the assass and shows several of the cars outside the hospital, including the limousine and the Mayor's car with Mrs. Cabell still in it.

The same issue also estimates that a crowd of 200 people gathered outside the hospital.

A News analysis in the 12/2/63 Inquirer claimed that it was expected in Washington for Rusk's influence to rise under the new administration, and for the new President to "depend more fully on the cabinet and the National Security Council." It is my understanding that JFK sought to lessen the role of the NSC.

Of interest to Harold also, the NYT from 10/1 to 10/10/63 have pretty good coverage of the Lodge-Richardson battle in South Vietnam over policy, plus JFK recalling Richardson.

I can't think of anything else to say. I'd like my Bond slides back whenever convenient for you. If you still want, I can send my Couch-Weigman ~~XXXX~~ frames for you to put on slides.

Best,

cc Harold